

Message Text

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USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROM

AMCONSULATEMUNICH

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMMBASSY WARSAW 2627

USLO PEKING

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 1110

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RO, CZ

SUBJECT: VISIT OF ROMANIAN PREMIER MANESCU TO PRAGUE: RELATIONS

ON THE UPSWING, HUSAK TO VISIT IN JUNE

REF BUCHAREST 76 0440

1. VISIT OF ROMANIAN PREMIER MANEA MANESCU TO PRAGUE APRIL 21-23
WAS, JUDGING FROM COMMUNIQUE AND CONVERSATION WITH ROMANIAN
EMBASSY OFFICER, DEVOTED OVERWHELMINGLY TO ECONOMIC MATTERS. IN
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DEFERENCE TO ROMANIAN WISHES, COMMUNIQUE, SPEECHES AND TOASTS
OMITTED REFERENCES TO PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM, THE 25TH
CPSU PARTY CONGRESS, AND COOPERATION WITH THE USSR.

2. TRADE: AS MENTIONED IN COMMUNIQUE, BILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENT
FOR 1976-80 PROVIDES FOR A FIFTY-FOUR PERCENT INCREASE IN VOLUME
OF TRADE AS COMPARED WITH THE 1971-75 AGREEMENT. ROMANIAN

EMBOFF TOLD US BUCHAREST WAS PLEASED, BUT WOULD HAVE PREFERRED AN EVEN LARGER INCREASE. PERCENTAGE OF ROMANIAN EXPORTS TO CSSR WHICH IS MADE UP OF MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT NOW STANDS AT FORTY-SIX PERCENT, WHEREAS INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS COMPRIZE FORTY-NINE PERCENT OF CZECHOSLOVAKI'S TURNOVER TO ROMANIA. COMMENT: ROMANIAN EMBOFF EXPRESSED HIS OPINION THAT CZECHS HAVE PREJUDICES ABOUT ROMANIA, WHICH DESPITE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THERE CAUSE THEM TO LOOK DOWN ON POTENTIAL FOR BILATERAL TRADE; POLES AND EAST GERMANS, ON OTHER HAND, WERE MORE RECEPTIVE TO ROMANIAN OVERTURES AND TRADE FIGURES HAD REISEN WITH THOSE COUNTRIES, WHILE FALLING WITH CZECHOSLOVAKIA. END COMMENT.

3. CULTURAL TIES: ON EVE OF MANESCU VISIT, CZECHOSLOVAKS OFFERED ROMANIANS A SITE FOR A CULTURAL CENTER IN PRAGUE WHICH ROMANIAN EMBASSY FOUND ACCEPTABLE. ROMANIANS HAVE LONG PRESSED FOR A CULTURAL CENTER IN DOWNTOWN PRAGUE WHICH WOULD BE COMPARABLE IN SIZE AND PROMINENCE TO THOSE MAINTAINED BY GDR, POLAND AND HUNGARY. CZECHOSLOVAKS HAVE STALLED BY RECURRENTLY OFFERING SMALL AND BADLY-LOCATED QUARTERS WHICH THEY KNEW WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE. THE TUZEX STORE ON DLOUHA AVENUE IN PRAGUE'S OLD TOWN WILL BE CLOSED THIS FALL AND TAKEN OVER BY ROMANIANS FOR CULTURAL CENTER. AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF IMPROVING CZECHOSLOVAK-RUMANIAN RELATIONS, RUDE PRAVO REPORTED APRIL 28 THAT SLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY FIRST SECRETARY JOSEF LENART RECEIVED THE ROMANIAN CONSUL GENERAL IN BRATISLAVA, CAROL COSMA. WHAT RUDE PRAVO FAILED TO MENTION WAS THAT THE CONSUL GENERAL HAS WAITED SIX AND ONE-HALF YEARS FOR WHAT WAS IN EFFECT A COURTESY CALL.

4. HUSAK VISIT: ACCORDING TO ROMANIAN EMBOFF, THE OFFICIAL VISIT
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TO BUCHAREST BY PRESIDENT HUSAK, EXPECTED TO SIGNIFY DEFINITIVE BURYING OF THE HATCHET FROM THE 1968 DISPUTE, IS NOW SCHEDULED FOR THE SECOND HALF OF JUNE. ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR HAS TOLD AMBASSADOR APRIL 28, HOWEVER, THAT WHILE HUSAK WILL DEFINITELY VISIT BUCHAREST IN 1977, A SPECIFIC DATE HAS NOT YET BEEN SET.

5. COMMENT: ROMANIAN-CZECHOSLOVAK RELATIONS APPEAR TO BE IMPROVING WITHIN THE PARAMETERS IMPOSED BY BUCHAREST'S INDEPENDENT STANCE AND PRAGUE'S SUBSERVIENCE TO MOSCOW. THE COMING HUSAK VISIT TO BUCHAREST WILL REPRESENT A MAJOR EFFORT BY THE CZECHOSLOVAKS TO CLOSE THE CIRCLE AND "NORMALIZE" POST-1968 RELATIONS WITH CEAUSESCU. IN THIS REGARD, IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT ROMANIAN EMBASSY OFFICERS HERE STILL POINT OUT TO US THAT THE ROMANIAN LEADERSHIP HAS NEVER RETRACTED ITS CONDEMNATION OF THE SOVIETS' ARMED INTERVENTION AGAINST THE DUBCEK REGIME.
BYRNE

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